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REGIONAL AFGHAN MUNICIPALITIES PROGRAM FOR URBAN POPULATIONS – REGIONAL COMMAND NORTH

MONTHLY REPORT: APRIL 2012



Photo: Citizens in Mazar-e-Sharif's District 5 have become accustomed to the door-to-door trash collection as the RU-N trash collection project neared completion. The Municipality assumed management of the project this month and will continue the service that RU-N began.

MAY 15, 2012

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ABBREVIATIONS & TERMS

CLIN	Contract Line Item Number
CO	Contracts Officer
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DoWA	Department of Woman's Affairs
EA	Embedded Advisor
GDMA	General Directorate of Municipal Affairs
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTL	Municipal Team Leader
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAAG	Public Administration Advisory Group
PBB	Performance Based Budgeting
PBT	Project-based Training
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RAMP UP program)	Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations (USAID
RC (E,W,N,S)	ISAF Regional Command East, West, North, South
RU-N	RAMP UP North
SDAG	Service Delivery Advisory Group
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SOW	Scope of Work
TA	Technical Assistance
TAMIS	Technical Assistance Management Information System
TOR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

Terms

<i>gozar</i>	Neighborhood
<i>nahya</i>	Municipal District
<i>qaryadars</i>	village leaders
<i>wakil or kаланter</i>	<i>nahya</i> or <i>gozar</i> representative
<i>Tashkeel</i>	administrative structure of a GIRoA entity
<i>Safayi tax</i>	service charge and property tax
<i>Moustoufiat</i>	the provincial-level branch of the Ministry of Finance

ABOUT RAMP UP NORTH

The purpose of the Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations for Regional Command North (RAMP UP North) is to create effective, responsive, democratic, transparent, and accountable municipal governance in the nine provinces that comprise the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF's) Regional Command North.

RAMP UP North will: (1) increase the capacity of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) municipal officials, (2) markedly improve the delivery of municipal services to citizens in target municipalities, and (3) increase municipal capacity to enable, support, and sustain economic growth. As a result of the RAMP UP North, Afghan citizens will receive better services, understand the responsibilities of municipal leaders, play an active role in the municipal decision-making process, and see local governance structures as legitimate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the month of April, RU-N advisors continued to focus on budget preparation, assisting municipal officials to revise their budgets from 12 months to nine months. In addition, RU-N advisors facilitated or supported the facilitation of draft Municipal Law public consultation workshops in all nine municipalities.

Both round one and round two sub-projects continued to progress, with several round one sub-projects near completion and some round two sub-projects receiving conceptual approval. RU-N advisors, municipal officials, and citizens continued to monitor the round one sub-projects on a regular basis.

RU-N advisors continued to assist in business registration and licensing as well. By the end of April, almost all of the data entry was complete and tax bill printing had begun. RU-N advisors assisted in checking the accuracy of the data entered and tax bills generated.

PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

- In terms of capacity building, RU-N advisors provided technical assistance (TA) to municipal officials on budget preparation, especially in terms of revising the 12-month municipal budget to 9 months. In addition, the RU-N Procurement Manager provided functional training on procurement at the Maymana bid opening on April 24.
- Due to the technical assistance provided by RU-N advisors, eight municipalities were able to draft their 12-month budgets on time, according to the schedule provided by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) and the General Directorate of Municipal Affairs (GDMA). As of April 30, all the budget revisions from the 12-month to the 9-month format have been completed, governors have signed six budgets, and four have been submitted to GDMA/IDLG.
- In terms of sub-projects, the final round one sub-project, the Maymana women's park improvement sub-project, entered the procurement phase. Of the remaining round one sub-projects, three have been completed and five are ongoing. Round two sub-project proposed scopes of work (SOWs) have been drafted. Four of those have been conceptually approved, three were submitted for conceptual approval, and two are being revised based on feedback from RU-N/Mazar.
- During April, RU-N advisors continued to assist municipal officials in business registration in Aybak, Faizabad, Pul-e-Khumri, Sar-e-Pul, and Taloqan. In three municipalities, data entry of business registration survey forms is complete (Aybak, Faizabad, and Sar-e-Pul). In Pul-e-Khumri and Taloqan, data entry was close to completion. Tax bill printing has also begun and distribution of the bills will begin in early May.
- Citizens were actively involved in the draft Municipal Law public consultation workshops across the north. In addition, three Service Delivery Advisory Group (SDAG) meetings were held this month in Aybak (4/3), Faizabad (4/23), and Kunduz (4/24).

PROGRAMMING ACTIVITIES

CAPACITY BUILDING

Technical Assistance (TA)

RU-N advisors continued to provide TA to municipal officials on budget preparation and revision and business registration and licensing. For instance, on April 15 in Aybak, RU-N advisors provided TA to the newly-hired Revenue Manager (male, youth) on business registration and licensing and how to utilize the database software.

Consultations

RU-N advisors held regular consultations with municipal staff throughout the month. Topics of consultations in April mainly included budget preparation/revision, business registration and licensing, proposed SOWs for the second round sub-projects, and facilitation of the draft Municipal Law workshops.

Regional Workshops/Conferences

RU-N advisors, at the request of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), facilitated public workshops on the new draft Municipal Law on April 10-11.

In Faizabad, Pul-e-Khumri, Sar-e-Pul, and Taloqan, RU-N advisors facilitated the workshops, while in Aybak, Kunduz, Maymana, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Sheberghan they supported the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP's) facilitation. Over 550 participants attended the first day, over 620 participants attended the second day, and more than 60 of these participants were women. Participants included members of the elected provincial councils, municipal district representatives (*kalantars*), civil society (including women and youth) representatives, NGOs, and private sector representatives.

Governors and mayors gave opening remarks stating the importance of consulting with citizens on the draft law, since they (citizens) would be most affected by the contents. Participants were then divided into smaller working groups and various provisions of the draft law were distributed to the groups. Several hours of discussions ensued, and citizens noted their concerns and suggestions. Before concluding the workshop on the second day, the groups presented their compiled concerns and suggestions to all participants. RU-N advisors assisted in the collection of all the feedback for submission to IDLG officials.



A RU-N advisor in Aybak provided technical assistance on business registration to the Municipal Revenue Manager on April 15, 2012.



Citizens in Sar-e-Pul provided feedback on the draft Municipal Law on April 10, 2011.

Functional Training / Project-based Training (PBT)

RU-N staff continued to utilize the Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects as opportunities to provide functional training to build the capacity of both municipal officials and citizen leaders in various phases of project management.

For instance, on April 24, the RU-N Procurement Manager provided functional training to citizens and the Mayor in Maymana. The topic of the training was open and transparent bid openings and evaluations. Nine citizens, mostly contractors, were present at the bid opening and training.



The RU-N Procurement Manager presented on transparency in procurement on April 24, 2012 in Maymana.

SUSTAINABLE SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVEMENT SUB-PROJECTS

Several round one sub-projects are approaching completion and RU-N advisors have begun to hand over the management of sub-projects to municipal officials. For instance, on April 19, a RU-N advisor in Sheberghan met with the Mayor to officially hand over the completed 50 large and 50 small trash bins to the Municipality. Fabrication of the bins was completed in late March.

In Mazar-e-Sharif the RU-N implementation of the round one sub-project, trash collection in District 5, was completed on April 29. The Municipality took over implementation, and RU-N advisors are providing technical assistance as needed. The close out of the sub-project will be completed pending approval for the disposition of equipment.

The original completion date for the Sar-e-Pul round one park improvement sub-project was April 12; however, that date has been extended so that the contractor can address some quality control issues raised by citizen monitors (i.e. re-welding and re-painting of the boundary fence).

The round one sub-project in Maymana entered the procurement phase this month with a bid opening for the women's park improvement sub-project held on April 24. Attendees to the bid opening included 9 male citizens, the Mayor, and RU-N advisors. The RU-N Procurement Manager provided information on the process and the importance of transparency. The bid evaluation was held the following day.



Citizens monitored the Sar-e-Pul park sub-project contractor's work on April 15, 2012.

In terms of round two sub-projects, by the end of the reporting period, four proposed SOWs had been conceptually approved (Kunduz, Maymana, Sheberghan, and Taloqan), three had been submitted for conceptual approval (Aybak, Faizabad, and Sar-e-Pul), and two had been presented to the RU-N/Mazar Project Review Committee and were being revised based on feedback (Mazar-e-Sharif and Pul-e-Khumri).

Summaries of the status of sub-projects can be found in the tables below:

First Round Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects —Status as of April 30, 2012			
Municipality	Sub-project Type	Status	Notes
Aybak	Park Improvement	Completed	Completed on February 28, 2012 and now being regularly maintained by the Municipality
Faizabad	Trash Collection	Ongoing	Expected completion date: May 6, 2012 (10 stone masonry trash bin fabrication completed)
Kunduz	Trash Collection	Ongoing	Expected completion date: May 13, 2012
Maymana	Women's Park Improvement	Procurement Phase	Bid opening and evaluation held April 24-25, 2012
Mazar-e-Sharif	Trash Collection	Completed	April 29, 2012
Pul-e-Khumri	Trash Collection	Ongoing	Expected completion date: May 16, 2012
Sar-e-Pul	Park Improvement	Ongoing	75% completed with some punch list items remaining—expected completion date delayed due to earlier security issues
Sheberghan	Trash Bin Fabrication	Completed	March 25, 2012 and handed over to the Municipality on April 19, 2012
Taloqan	Trash Collection	Ongoing	Expected completion date: May 12, 2012

Second Round Sustainable Service Delivery Improvement Sub-projects —Status as of April 30, 2012		
Municipality	Sub-project type	Status
Aybak	Public Latrines	Submitted for Conceptual Approval
Faizabad	Public Latrines	Submitted for Conceptual Approval
Kunduz	Park Improvement	Conceptual Approval Received
Maymana	Public Latrines	Conceptual Approval Received
Mazar-e-Sharif	Trash Collection	Minor Revisions to Proposed SOW in Progress
Pul-e-Khumri	Park Construction	Minor Revisions to Proposed SOW in Progress
Sar-e-Pul	Market Improvement	Submitted for Conceptual Approval
Sheberghan	Public Latrines	Conceptual Approval Received
Taloqan	Park Improvement	Conceptual Approval Received

BUDGET PREPARATION AND REVENUE GENERATION

RU-N advisors continued to work with municipal officials on the annual municipal budgets. IDLG/GDMA revised the budget calendar from 12 months to nine months, and RU-N advisors assisted in

making appropriate revisions to the draft budgets in all nine municipalities. To date, all of those revisions are completed, and six 9-month budgets were signed by governors. Five of those signed have been submitted to IDLG/GDMA. Details on progress in relation to budget preparation are listed in the table below:

<i>RU-N-Assisted Budget Preparation by Municipality as of April 30, 2012</i>				
Municipality	Date 12-month budget finalized and ready to submit to IDLG/GDMA	Date 9-month budget revisions completed	Date 9-month budget signed by Governor	Date 9-month budget submitted to IDLG/GDMA
Aybak	4/3/12	4/17/12	4/25/12	-
Faizabad	4/1/12	4/12/12	4/25/12	4/28/12
Kunduz	3/29/12	4/8/12	4/18/12	4/21/12
Maymana	*	4/25/12	-	-
Mazar-e-Sharif	4/2/12	4/9/12	4/9/12	4/18/12
Pul-e-Khumri	3/28/12	4/18/12	-	-
Sar-e-Pul	4/1/12	4/18/12	4/26/12	-
Sheberghan	4/4/12	4/16/12	4/17/12	4/21/12
Taloqan	4/1/12	4/19/12	Submitted to Governor's Office on 4/22/12	-

*An issue surrounding the leases of some markets in Maymana arose, delaying the budget preparation process. However, the issue has now been resolved.

In terms of business registration and licensing, RU-N advisors reported that data entry in three out of the five municipalities has been completed. In Taloqan, data entry staff had entered 4,121 out of 4,510 business registration forms, and in Pul-e-Khumri 3,656 of the 3,950 survey forms had been entered into the database.

RU-N advisors assisted in ensuring that tax bills were printing properly and that the tax rates were checked for accuracy. Tax bill printing had begun in Faizabad, and in Aybak and Sar-e-Pul, RU-N advisors reported that new business license fees were being reviewed in the Governor's Office. Once the new fees are approved, bills can be printed.



A data entry clerk in Pul-e-Khumri enters business registration forms into the municipal database on April 19, 2012.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Public Meetings

There were public meetings in all nine municipalities on the draft Municipal Law facilitated by RU-N and UNDP on April 10-11. See the "Regional Workshops/Conferences" section of this report for details. (see Regional Workshops/Conferences)

Women's Participation in Municipal Decision Making

RU-N advisors continued to update SDAG member lists to ensure that membership numbers reflected at least 25% females. In cases where the percentage of female SDAG members was under 25%, RU-N

advisors worked with SDAG officers to begin recruitment of additional female members. In some municipalities, women continued to participate in the monitoring of first round sub-projects; for example, in Sar-e-Pul, the Director of Women's Affairs Department and the Director of Women for Afghan Women's NGO have been regularly monitoring the Park Improvement Project.

Citizen Surveys and Beneficiary Group Meetings

RU-N advisors continued to conduct bi-weekly citizen surveys on first round sub-projects. Results indicated overwhelming citizen satisfaction with the sub-projects thus far.

In addition, RU-N facilitated *kalanter*s meetings. In most of these meetings, RU-N advisors collaborated with *kalanter*s to distribute and collect citizen report cards on sub-projects.

Service Delivery Advisory Group Meetings

During April, RU-N advisors facilitated three SDAG meetings.

On April 3 in Aybak, RU-N advisors facilitated an SDAG meeting in which nine male and two female citizens participated. The purpose was to select members of the four SDAG sub-committees—Monitoring and Evaluation, Procurement and Transparency, Advocacy, and Survey.

Similar SDAG meetings took place in Faizabad on April 23 (with 21 male and 4 female participants) and in Kunduz on April 24 (with 17 male and 6 female participants).



A RU-N advisor facilitated an SDAG meeting in Aybak on April 3, 2012.

PLANNED MAY ACTIVITIES

RU-N advisors will focus on the following activities in May:

- All embedded advisors (EAs) will attend a workshop at RU-N/Mazar on May 2-3 for training on ethics and capacity building.
- As round one sub-projects reach completion, RU-N advisors will ensure a smooth transition of sub-project management to municipal officials. In addition, RU-N advisors will complete the close-out phase of those sub-projects that are completed, including the closing ceremonies for the formal handover of project activities to the municipality.
- Round two sub-projects will enter the procurement stage, and RU-N advisors will provide functional training in conjunction with bid openings and evaluations.
- RU-N advisors will assist in the printing and distribution of tax bills to businesses in order to facilitate the process of business licensing.
- The Round 3 project selection process will begin in May, with facilitation from RU-N advisors.
- RU-N advisors will follow up on the submission of municipal budgets to IDLG/GDMA and provide TA to municipal officials if/when questions or requests are raised by IDLG/GDMA. In addition, advisors will begin preparing for the public budget meetings (planned for June and July) where the final approved budgets will be presented and explained to citizens.

APPENDIX: RU-N ONE-PAGERS

Each month RU-N plans to highlight particular achievements, successes, or unique aspects of the program. The following pages contain two such stories.



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USAID 50 ANNIVERSARY

Temporary RU-N Program Becomes One Young Woman's Chance for a Permanent Post

RU-N requires that each municipality involved in the business registration program hire at least two women for data entry posts.



Two data entry staff work hard to enter their quota of business registration forms into the municipal database.

"If she accepts this job, she will be the only [permanent] female staff member in the Municipality."

**—Engineer Shokor, the
Aybak Municipal
Construction Manager**

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-0000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Zohra Zaheeri, 21, graduated from Aybak Teacher Training Institute last year. The vocational institute is one of only two institutions offering post-secondary education in the area. Coming from a conservative community, Zohra was not able to leave her home to attend a four-year university in a big city like Kabul.

One day, a woman from the Service Delivery Advisory Group told Zohra about job openings for the Aybak business registration program.

In early March, with RU-N assistance, the Aybak Municipality recruited a total of 16 surveyors and two female data entry clerks on a temporary (one to two months) basis. Zohra wanted to apply, but was not sure her family would allow her to work. Indeed, her father, Haji Obaidullah, was reluctant to allow her to accept the job, because he was concerned about the working environment.

After some pleading from Zohra, Haji Obaidullah agreed to visit City Hall, where his daughter would be based. If he approved of the environment, he would allow her to apply. Immediately upon entering City Hall, he met Ghafor Hakimi, a RU-N embedded advisor and former teacher at Aybak Teacher Training Institute. Hakimi is a well-known and respected member of the local community. With Hakimi's assurances that Zohra would be safe and looked after, Haji Obaidullah granted his daughter permission to apply for the job and Zohra was hired.

But Zohra's challenges didn't end there. She recalled, "On the first day, I managed to enter just 24 [business registration] forms into the database. We were expected to enter at least 30 forms each per day! I improved, day by day, and now I can enter about 85 forms per day, which is far beyond what I am expected to do".

Municipal officials were so impressed with Zohra's hard work and dedication, that they offered her a permanent job as a computer operator. "Her contract will be approved in Kabul by late May, if all goes as planned," Hakimi said.

Engineer Shokor, the Aybak Municipal Construction Manager, stated, "If she accepts this job, she will be the only [permanent] female staff member in the Municipality."

RU-N required that each municipality involved in the program hire at least two females part of the business registration short-term staff.



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AFGHANISTAN

USAID 50 ANNIVERSARY

RAMP UP – North Assists Municipalities to Facilitate Public Workshops on a New Municipal Law



Participants in Sar-e-Pul broke into groups to discuss the draft Municipal Law on April 10-11, 2012.



"The new law should include provisions regulating fair distribution of land for housing."

—a female participant from
Mazar-e-Sharif

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-0000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

The current Municipal Law was developed and instituted during Taliban rule in 2000. For the past few years, Afghan leaders have been working on revising and updating the law. Most importantly, the new law would be vetted by citizens across Afghanistan before being institutionalized.

The new draft Municipal Law was finalized in late 2011 by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG). Citizens were to be consulted on the draft in public workshops in all municipalities before sending it to the Parliament and the President. IDLG requested that the Regional Afghan Municipalities Program for Urban Populations Regional Command North (RAMP UP – North or RU-N) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) facilitate these public workshops, which lasted for two consecutive days, April 10-11, 2012.

In Faizabad, Pul-e-Khumri, Sar-e-Pul, and Taloqan, RU-N advisors facilitated the workshops, while in Aybak, Kunduz, Maymana, Mazar-e-Sharif, and Sheberghan, they supported UNDP's facilitation. Over 550 participants attended the first day, over 620 participants attended the second day, and more than 60 of these participants were women. Participants included members of the elected provincial councils, municipal district representatives (kalanTERS), civil society (including women and youth) representatives, NGOs, and private sector representatives.

Governors and mayors gave opening remarks stating the importance of consulting with citizens on the draft law, since they would be most affected by the contents. Participants were then divided into smaller working groups and various provisions of the draft law were distributed to the groups. Several hours of discussions ensued, and citizens noted their concerns and suggestions. Before concluding the workshop on the second day, the groups presented their compiled concerns and suggestions to all participants.

Mohammad Yaqub, one of the participants in Sar-e-Pul, stated that "the draft law has set clear education criteria but not clear age requirements for candidates running for the office of mayor. The article that deals with age requirements states that the candidate should be 30 years old. I think that the article should set clear age boundaries. For example, it should say 'at least 30' or 'between 30 and 65'. The law does not state how many times a person can run for the office of mayor either."

Huma Gohari, Civil Society Manager for RU-N stated that several participants in Pul-e-Khumri challenged these criteria for mayors. "The challenges included ambiguity of age and the number of years the candidate should have lived in the constituency. Participants also expressed concern over the absence of provisions dealing with price control, which was one of the main responsibilities of municipalities in the past."

Other common concerns centered on land distribution issues and unfair criteria for differentiation between a first grade and second grade municipality.

Turyalai Razaqyar, the former Director of Information and Culture for Balkh Province stated with a sense of humor "I did not know that the Taliban Law was being enforced on us until today", referring to the current Municipal Law.

The Head of the General Directorate of Municipal Affairs (GDMA) stated that the main goal for these gatherings was to promote good governance by involving citizens, who could enrich the draft law by bringing new ideas to it.